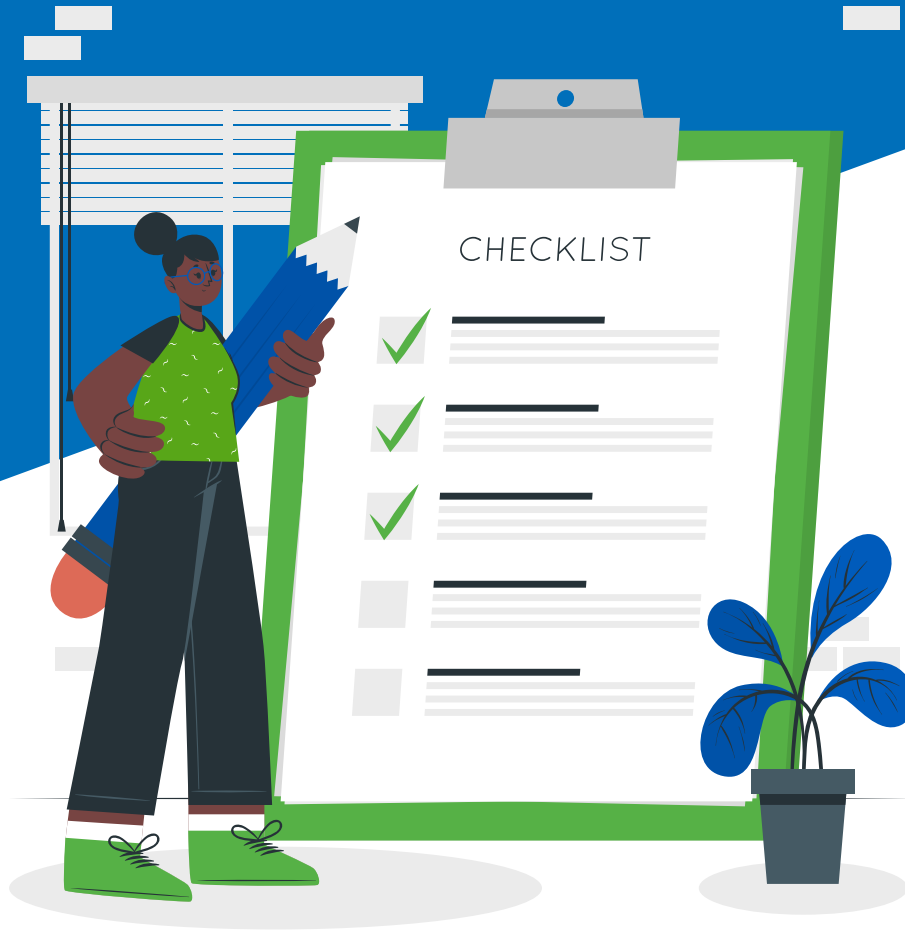


# Small Business Marketing Guide



**BUSINESSLINK**



## Are you feeling overwhelmed by the volume of marketing tools and tactics promoted to you, promising to transform your business?

How do you know if radio advertising or Facebook advertising works? The truth is, without a clear strategy, there really isn't any way to know what marketing tactics and tools will be successful. Whether you are starting out or rethinking your existing marketing strategy, this checklist will help you become more successful in your efforts.

### Marketing Defined

**“Marketing is getting someone who has a need to know, like, and trust you.”**

–John Jantsch, author of Duct Tape Marketing

# Set Your Goals

Before you begin, think about your goals and objectives and write those down:

Estimate what you think your budget for your marketing efforts might be:

## Start With Strategy

Many small businesses try to be “all things to all people” but success is usually found by serving a narrowly defined niche market well. For example, Apple has become a multi-billion-dollar mobile phone company with only 19% market share by focusing narrowly on a core group of “ideal clients”.

There are 2 important components to developing a marketing strategy:

1. Narrow your focus to an **ideal client** type.
2. **Differentiate your business** to that client.

# Define Your Brand

Now that you understand your ideal client and how you will differentiate your product or service, it's time to develop your brand. A brand is much more than logos and taglines. Your brand is the experience your company provides for your customers. Every interaction your customers have with you is a brand moment. Successful companies like Starbucks and Red Bull leverage their brand vision to rally their employees and create a positive corporate culture. Use the checklist below as your guide to creating your unique brand.

Focus on a **Unique Value Proposition** (UVP) - your brand is your promise to the customer so it's important to create a UVP. Use the information from your "ideal client" and "different by design" worksheets to answer the question:

What value does my company provide to customers that no one else can?

Go even deeper by downloading and completing the [UVP worksheet](#) from Strategyzer.

Create a **Vision Statement** - vision statements are often confused with mission statements, but they are not the same thing. A vision statement describes your desired future state and is often 1–2 sentences long. A mission statement is generally an internal statement declaring what your company does and what values it stands for. A great vision statement answers the question:

*"If I could wave a magic wand and see my company's future in 3 years, how would my company be impacting the (world, community or country?)"*

Example: Tesla - "to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy"

My Company Vision is:

See more examples [here](#).

Design your **Visual Identity** - your visual identity consists of all the imagery and graphical information that expresses how your brand is different from others. It is everything from your logo to the fonts you choose and even the interior design of your store or restaurant. The purpose of visual identity is:

1. To create an emotional impression—a strong visual and consistent colours and images increase your brand recall with customers
2. To inform your target market about the nature of the products or services you offer
3. To unify your brand message consistently in all the visual material

Imagine you are creating an important first impression with potential customers, giving them an experience from the moment they discover you until they return to purchase from you again in the future.

There are many great “Do-it Yourself” websites and tools that will help you create a logo and visual materials on a budget, including:

- [Vistaprint](#)
- [Fiverr](#)
- [99 designs](#)
- [Pixabay](#)
- [Canva](#)

Alternatively, it’s a good idea to reach out to a local, professional graphic designer who can work with you. [Contact Business Link](#) to learn more about how we can link you to local service providers across Alberta.



# Your Website

Having a strong online presence is crucial in today's market. Think of your website as a digital "calling card". Your website tells the world you are available and ready to conduct business. Visitors will use your site to learn more about your company, conduct e-commerce purchases, and research what other customers are saying about you.

There are a variety of website building platforms that make it easy for you, or anyone you may hire, to build a professional website. A few popular ones are:

- [GoDaddy](#)
- [Shopify](#)
- [Squarespace](#)
- [Weebly](#)
- [Wix](#)
- [WordPress](#)

Download our [Golden Rules for Your Website](#) to learn more about designing your website.

## Evaluate Your Marketing Channels

Delivering the right message to the right people at the right time has never been easier. However, with the many options available, you'll need to determine what works best for your business. Marketing in the digital age may be less expensive, but if you aren't specific about which channels you're using to meet your goals, it could end up being more time consuming.

Download and review this list of top [marketing channels](#). Examine each channel and ask yourself a few questions:

What channels do my competitors use?

Am I a Business-to-Business provider (B2B) or a Business-to-Consumer provider (B2C)?

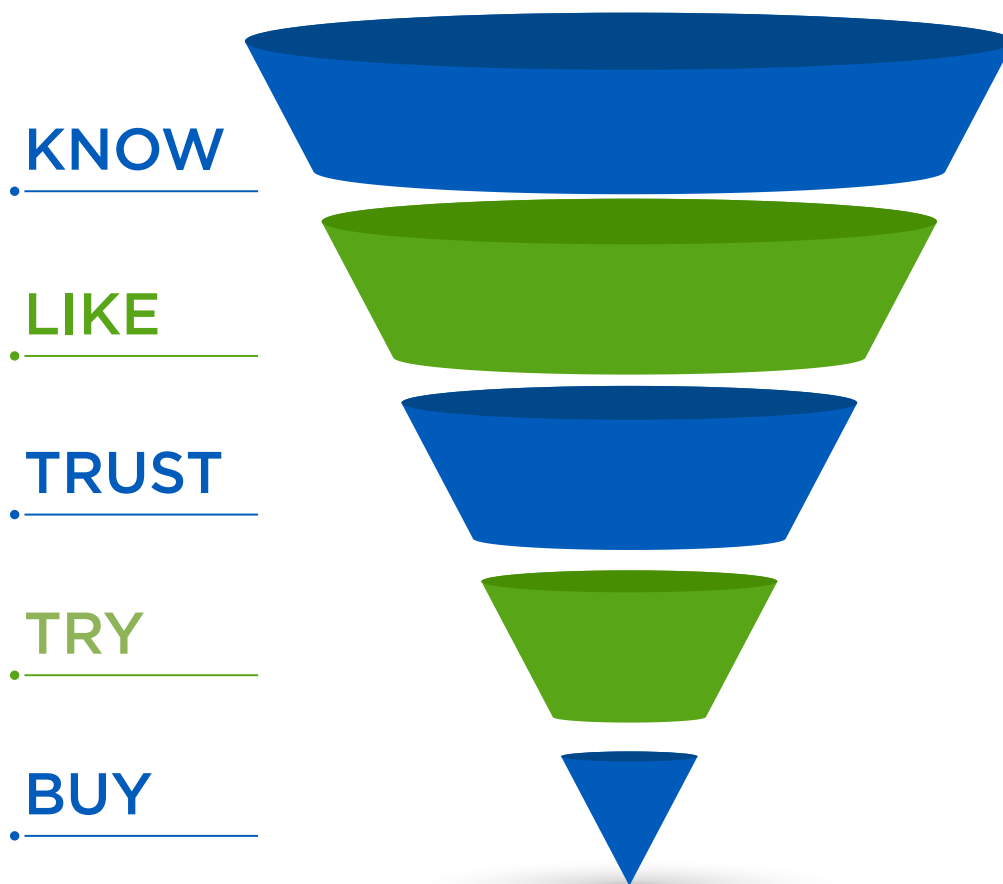
Will I be managing my own marketing or outsourcing this task?

If I were shopping for my own products or services, where would I look?

# The Marketing Funnel

The marketing funnel is a concept that has been around since the mid 1800's. It is a visual aid that helps you understand the process of turning a potential customer (a lead) into a profitable customer. The idea is that you cast a wide net across your marketing channels to capture leads and slowly nurture them through a funnel like the one below.

Ideally, you will be sorting through all your marketing materials and deciding at what stage of the funnel to use them. This is where all your hard work identifying your ideal client will pay off.







## Measure, Measure, Measure!

Most businesses use “online” and “offline” marketing techniques. Download our [marketing channels](#) guide to learn more about a variety of marketing activities you can try in your business.

You can determine the effectiveness of your marketing efforts by measuring the results of each campaign. Set a budget for each campaign and decide if your goal is to generate leads or sales. Did you see a 10% increase in web traffic over 6 months? Did you make 20% more sales over the holiday season? The only way you will know if your efforts are paying off is by making sure you are clear about your objectives.

- Visit [Marketing Land](#) to learn about how to measure the effectiveness of offline marketing
- Visit [Business.com](#) to learn more about tracking and measuring your online marketing efforts